

To: Sarah Schaerr Norton, Director of Public Relations
Accuracy In Media

From: Kellyanne Conway, President & CEO
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Re: Executive Summary and Analysis: National Omnibus Survey

Date: September 12, 2006

Introduction and Methodology

the polling company™, inc./WomanTrend is pleased to present to **Accuracy in Media (AIM)** this analysis of findings of two questions added to a recent national telephone survey of 1,000 adults aged 18 and older.

The survey was fielded September 7-10, 2006 at a Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) phone facility using live callers. The sample was drawn utilizing Random Digit Dial (RDD), where phone numbers were generated by a computer to ensure that every household in the nation had an equal chance to be surveyed.

Sampling controls were used to ensure that a proportional and representative number of adults were interviewed from such demographic groups as age, gender, race and ethnicity and geographic region.

The questions administered in this survey – which focused on Arab-language network *Al-Jazeera's* plans to launch an English-language network in the United States – were approved by an authorized representative of AIM prior to fielding.

The margin of error is calculated at +/- 3.1% at the 95% confidence level, meaning that in 19 out of 20 cases, the results obtained would differ by no more than 3.1 percentage points in either direction if the entire adult population nationwide were to be surveyed. Margins of error for subgroups are higher.

Background Information

Al-Jazeera is an Arab-language television news network based in the Middle-Eastern country of Qatar. The network launched in 1996 with a \$150 million grant from the emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani¹. While *Al-Jazeera* aimed to become self-sufficient and financially independent through advertising sales by 2001, the emir continues provide substantial support with an annual subsidy of \$30-\$50 million per year. The network gained worldwide notice following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, when it broadcast video statements by Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaeda leaders. *Al-Jazeera's* programming is available worldwide through various satellite and cable systems. In the U.S., it is available through subscription satellite TV.

¹ Except where otherwise noted, all background information from Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Jazeera)

Al-Jazeera has been both praised and criticized by the U.S. government. Prior to the September 11th attacks, the network was lauded for its independent coverage of Middle Eastern issues. However, post-9/11 officials have condemned *Al-Jazeera* for being biased against America and for providing a forum for terrorist propaganda. The Bush administration has encouraged the government of Qatar to sell its interest in the network.²

Only July 4, 2005, *Al-Jazeera* officially announced its intention to launch an English-language network, *Al-Jazeera International*, in the United States. Not surprisingly, this announcement met with strong protests. Plans are for the new channel to have broadcast centers in Doha, Qatar (its current headquarters), Athens, London, Kuala Lumpur and Washington, DC and several veteran journalists and news producers from outlets such as CNN and the BBC have been recruited to the *Al-Jazeera International* team.

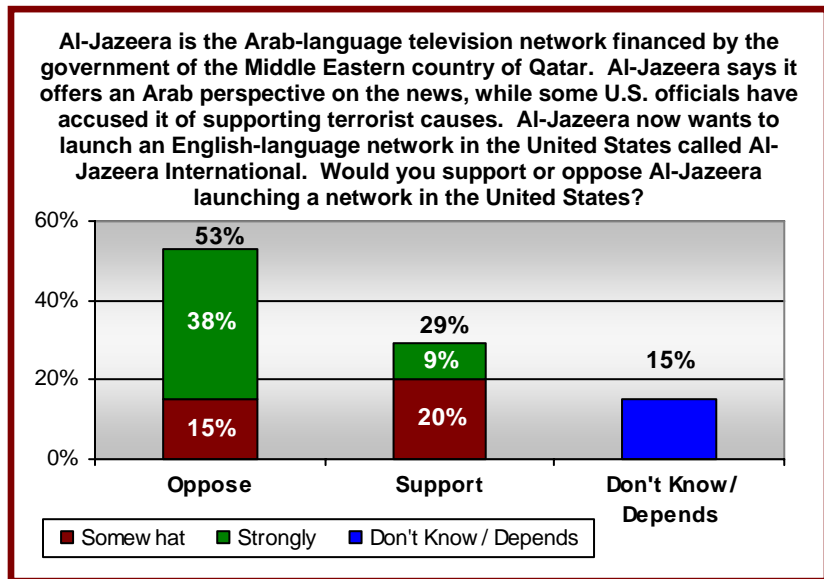
Analysis of Findings

Most Americans Reject American Version of *Al-Jazeera*.

Slightly more than one-half (53%) of U.S. adults raised their voices against Middle Eastern news network *Al-Jazeera* launching an American counterpart. This dwarfed support for the planned English-language net, known as *Al-Jazeera International* by 24-points.

Opposition to *Al-Jazeera International* was perhaps most distinguished by its intensity: **38% were adamantly against the new channel** – 9-points higher than the total number who favored it (29%).

A combined 15% of Americans were not willing to render a judgment on the issue, as 6% said “it depends” and 9% volunteered that they simply “didn’t know.”



- Men were more likely than women to support *Al-Jazeera* starting a network in the United States (32%-25%).
- Young adults (18-24) were the age group most in favor of *Al-Jazeera International* and, in fact, were among the only demographic cohorts studied who were as likely to support as oppose the new network (42%-41%).
- Seniors citizens (aged 65+) were the age group most against *Al-Jazeera International* (63%).

² “The Iraqi Election: The Network; Under Pressure, Qatar May Sell Jazeera Station:” The New York Times, January 30, 2005.

- African-Americans expressed greater acceptance of an English-language version of *Al-Jazeera* than did Whites, though they were still more likely to oppose the channel than welcome it. Blacks were also twice as likely as Whites to say “it depends.” Hispanics did not stand out from the population overall.

By 2-to-1, Americans Think U.S. Government Should Oppose *Al-Jazeera International*.

A majority (55%) of survey respondents declared that the United States government should actively take a stand against *Al-Jazeera International* being broadcast to American homes by domestic cable and satellite providers. The urgency of this directive was pronounced, as 38% felt the government should “*definitely oppose*” the English-language version of the Arab news net.

Cries for the government to oppose the launch of *Al-Jazeera International* were double those for lawmakers to welcome or encourage it. Still, an unignorable 27% said U.S. officials should support beaming the new net to U.S. TVs.

A notable portion of the survey population could not or would not declare their opinion: 7% offered a non-committal “it depends,” and 9% just “didn’t know.”

It is also important to remember that this question tested the general and hypothetical notion of the government “supporting” or “opposing” *Al-Jazeera International* and did NOT ask about an official government action. Americans are often wary of the government overstepping its bounds with excessive regulations. We can infer from these results that a large portion of adults might favor lawmakers actually stopping *Al-Jazeera International* from reaching U.S. homes, but Congressional or Presidential action is not necessarily what Americans are calling for here.

As I mentioned, *Al-Jazeera* is the Arab-language network financed by the government of the Middle Eastern country of Qatar. Do you think the U.S. government should support or oppose *Al-Jazeera’s* English-language network *Al-Jazeera International*, being broadcast to American households by cable and satellite systems?

27% TOTAL SUPPORT (NET)

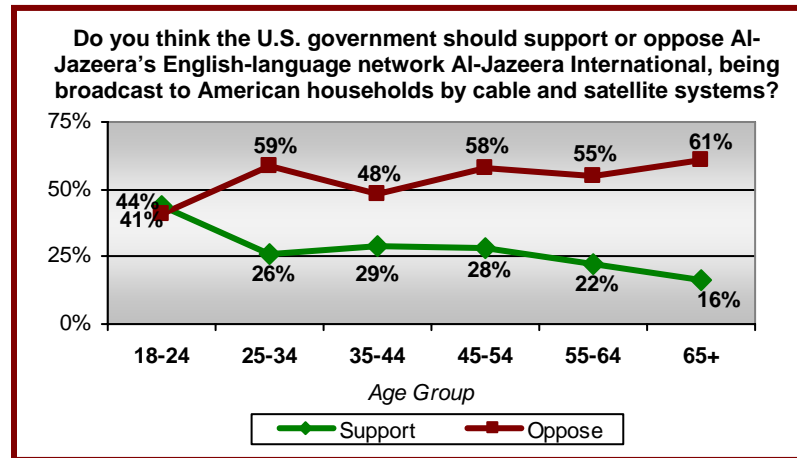
- 10% DEFINITELY SUPPORT
- 17% PROBABLY SUPPORT

55% TOTAL OPPOSE (NET)

- 17% PROBABLY OPPOSE
- 38% DEFINITELY OPPOSE
- 7% IT DEPENDS/ NEED MORE INFORMATION (VOL.)
- 9% DON’T KNOW (VOL.)
- 3% REFUSED (VOL.)

- Race also played a role in respondents’ reactions to this query. African-Americans were more likely than Whites and Hispanics to say the U.S. government should allow *Al-Jazeera* to broadcast its new network to American households (31% vs. 24% and 26%, respectively).
- However, approximately equal numbers of each group agreed that the government should oppose *Al-Jazeera International* (54% of Blacks; 54% of Whites; 58% of Hispanics). Whites were notably more likely to shrug their shoulders and say “I don’t know” (11% vs. 6% of Blacks and 3% of Hispanics).

- As demonstrated by the following chart, American youth (18-24 year olds) again stood out from their older counterparts as most open to *Al-Jazeera International*. They were the only group more likely to believe the U.S. government should support, rather than oppose the network launching an English-language channel in America (44%-41%). Seniors felt most strongly that the government should stand against the new news net (61%).



In Conclusion...

Americans were firmly against Middle-Eastern news outlet *Al-Jazeera* launching a network in the United States called *Al-Jazeera International*. The gravamen of the data suggest that Americans may endorse calls by non-governmental entities for the United States government to actively thwart the attempt by *Al-Jazeera International* to reach U.S. homes.

Still, as noted previously, embrace of the general concept of the government “opposing” *Al-Jazeera International* and actual support for regulation are not one and the same.

This survey may have been the first that many respondents had even heard about *Al-Jazeera's* plans to launch a network in America, and a comparable number may not even be familiar with the existing Arab-language network. This likely contributed to the large portion of undecided responses garnered by each question. In order to solidify these nascent yet notable seedlings of opposition against *Al-Jazeera International*, it seems imperative to educate Americans about *Al-Jazeera* generally, including its content, mandate, management and the like. This condition precedent will help in any effort to engage and enrage the public to whom elected officials are held accountable.